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CTB-HK-AD24077

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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January 15, 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR:

THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

HENRY A. KISSINGER

SUBJECT:

Situation in Vietnam

Combat activity was reported to be very light throughout South Vietnam yesterday. In the air war over North Vietnam, U.S. tactical aircraft flew 100 missions yesterday, while 30 B-52 strikes were flown.

Military Region 1

Combat activity in the northern portion of the region was at a reduced level with a slight increase in indirect enemy fire in the Marine Division's area of operation.

- Airborne units southwest of Quang Tri City continue to clear remaining pockets of enemy resistance along the Thach Han River.
- Last night, Da Nang Airbase was hit by ten 122-mm rockets. No casualties were reported on the base, but one of the rockets hit a village west of the base, causing light casualties to both ARVN and civilian personnel.
- In the Que Son Valley, the 3rd ARVN Division continues its attack toward Hiep Duc with success as another key objective along the approaches to the District Town was seized.

USAF, Army, Navy JCS &
NGA reviews completed.

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Military Region 2

Combat activity continued at a low level with a slight increase in indirect fire reported.

- Activity centered in Binh Dinh Province, where elements of the ARVN 22nd Division near Tam Quan were hit with

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-2-

an early morning mortar and ground attack resulting in moderate enemy and light ARVN casualties.

- Contacts throughout the remainder of the region consisted of light indirect fire and minor, small unit contacts.

Military Region 3

Enemy activity throughout the region remained extremely low for the second straight day.

- The Saigon River Corridor operation was the focal point of GVN-initiated activity. Fifteen battalions from three divisions and the Ranger Command are now involved in that operation.

Military Region 4

Combat operations were extremely light on both sides yesterday.

- A few scattered GVN-initiated contacts accounted for 46 enemy killed. Nine GVN killed and 57 wounded were reported.

U.S. Air and Naval Activity

The following air sorties were flown yesterday:

	<u>MR-1</u>	<u>MR-2</u>	<u>MR-3</u>	<u>MR-4</u>	<u>NVN</u>	<u>Total</u>
TacAir U.S.	97	46	26	12	100	281
TacAir VNAF	16	56	59	36	0	167
B-52	17	3	41	0	30	91*

*There were no sorties over Cambodia and six in Laos.

Yesterday, the following U.S. tactical air strikes were flown over North Vietnam by Route Package:

<u>RP-1</u>	<u>RP-2</u>	<u>RP-3</u>	<u>RP-4</u>	<u>RP-5</u>	<u>RP-6A</u>	<u>RP-6B</u>	<u>Offshore</u>	<u>Total</u>
85	6	9	0	0	0	0	0	100

There were no sorties flown north of the 20th Parallel.

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-3-

Tactical aircraft flew 100 attack sorties against 24 targets. In the lower Panhandle, F-111s struck a staging area, an interdiction point, a military complex, and a truck park. Five secondary explosions and two large sustained fires were reported. Tactical aircraft struck five storage areas in the central Panhandle and observed a secondary explosion at one of the locations. Other Navy jets struck nine bridges; four were dropped, three were damaged, and results were not observed at the other two. Other aircraft hit a radar site, two railroad sidings, a transshipment point, a SAM support facility, and a military installation, but results were not observed. A F-4 aircraft was downed by suspected AAA fire 28 miles southeast of Thanh Hoa. Both crew members were recovered. Tactical reconnaissance aircraft flew 20 sorties.

Naval Operations

Three destroyers conducted naval gunfire strikes against coastal targets 20 to 30 miles south of Thanh Hoa. They hit coast defense sites, highway bridges, railroad spurs, and a cave storage area. Some 140 rounds of inaccurate hostile fire were reported.

New Air Defense Missile System Detected

Recent photographs of a truck park at Dong Dang, near the Chinese border on the northeast rail line, show components of the SA-3 SAM system in North Vietnam for the first time. Equipment detected includes 70 to 90 missile cannisters and possible transporters as well as seven ZSU-23-4 AA weapons, which are sometimes associated with SA-3 deployments. No signals from the SA-3 guidance radar have been intercepted as yet, nor have firing sites or unit deployments been noted. The mention of two new SAM regimental designators in communications, however, may mean that units are being formed to receive the new system which is more maneuverable and has better performance against low- and medium altitude targets than the SA-2.

Cambodia

There were no significant developments in the Mekong River - Route 1 area. Government troops continued their southward movement from Neak Luong along both sides of the river without contact. Elsewhere, the Communists continued to maintain pressure on Cambodian positions north and southwest of Phnom Penh. Government attempts to relieve the garrison at Srang have encountered stiff resistance and progress has been slow.

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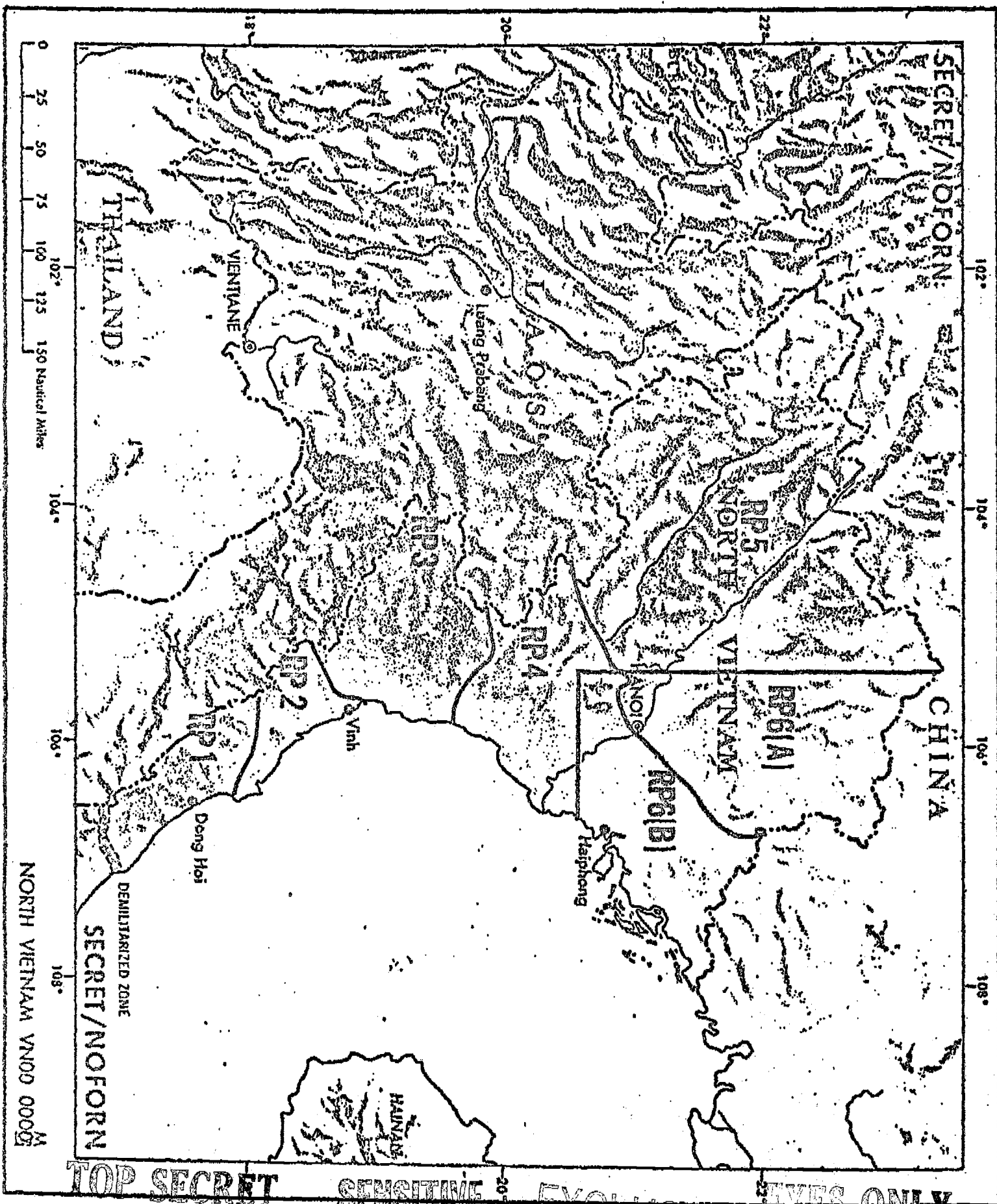
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-4-

To the east, the Communists have destroyed six bridges north and south of Svay Prey on Route 2. North of the capital, attacks against the garrison at Romeas on January 12 and 13 killed about 20 friendly troops and wounded more than 60. A three-battalion task force sweeping toward the area was stopped by enemy action yesterday. Romeas itself continued to receive sporadic indirect fire attacks and ground probes.

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